AN

ORATION

COMMEMORATIVE OF THE

CHARACTER OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

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HENRY H. TATOR, ESQ.

Nunquam nimis dicitar quod nunquam satis dicitur,

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ALBANY:
JOEL MUNSELL, 58 STATE STREET.
1852.





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Eden

DEDICATORY EPISTLE.

Says Euripides, "the very autumn of a form once fine, retains its outline beauties;" thus the millionth century of a fame once complete. finds it still in the youth of beauty, if not in the beauty of youth. The gross private manners of too many public men cause the latter attainment of them, to appear like a defaced sphinx. Give liberty a friend not gangrened by grossness, and she will encase it in her soul's soul, as does the skull its thoughtfilled Put on the erminical garb of public honors, trimmed with private virtues, and fortune will assuredly give you both her heart and hand. A ruler may not do unto his nation as did Alcibiades to the father of Callias, first commit a wanton injury to another, and then restitute at pleasure; rather let him seek with his best judgment to do it justice as a servant, and to serve it as he would an aged and generous parent, with a most prudent solicitude for its prosperity, security and peace. The reader, like the author, should be wiser at the closing than at the opening of a book; thus a ruler, like the people ruled, should be happier at the end than at the beginning of an administration. This twig of my gratefulness towards Thomas Jefferson, I dedicate to my friend, whose extensive learning, and sound judgment, adorned by a commanding genius,

EDWARD I. SEARS.

ORATION.

FRIENDS OF UNIVERSAL FREEDOM:

A commander of a nation's armed forces. who defends his country from fell invaders, deserves a high and honorable distinction from every class of his countrymen. A Monarch who governs his subjects with the skill of kindness and keen sense, ever reining them straitway towards the ability of self ruling, bears his A President who monarchship becomingly. discharges his executory duties energetically, and for the fixed good of all who bestow on him the governing favor, will rejoice with his benignant cotemporaries, and posterity will bless his remembrance. Yet an author whose, inspired spirit and independence of thought, despising personal or national oppression, draws up a plan to throw it off defiancingly, is a man who honors God; nay, he is the commander of military commanders, the master of hereditary monarchs, and presides over elect presidents, as is proper for such superiority of man-Such an author was Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson's youthful days were lived up in an ardent culture of his mind, in the acquisition of every species of valuable learning, in positive studentship over the works of the most marked literary writers of past ages. The arts and sciences likewise aided in filling out the stature of his great intellectuality. He avoided, with a powerful moral rigor of purpose, those little sins which society loves too generally to gratify its sense and unnatural appetites with, and which the young too frequently feel elated somewhat in imitating. He seems to have early comprehended the idea that life's value and attractiveness, like the farmer's renowned mint, lie quite beneath the surface, and that labor, life-long delving and labor, would alone bring them to his possession; and that an idle, useless, aimless mode of living, is altogether and entirely wrong, and leaves but darkness and death behind. He lived in youth so that in age also he might have a youthful life of blessed remembrance to live over and over, again and again, till life's last sand had It is in having a little of the richest soil that a fine yield is obtained without excessive tilling; likewise, it is by reading a few of the best works that the young become completely learned, of just habits, and obtain correct views of life with comparatively little toilsome study. There will always be a few books that must be to man as so many fixed guides to the respective subjects on which they discourse; as there will ever be a few heavenly bodies for fixed and shining references, that astronomers of all times may find their way without bewilderment while surveying and studying the deep blue eye of overhanging The horticulturist delights in the thought that the sprigs he is to day setting out and cultivating, will a few years hence be thrifty and fruitful; yet if they are then otherwise, and are from no neglect of his, unthrifty and unfruitful, the sight of them affords him little pleasure, while the reflection of lost and unrequited care and attention brings him pain; thus, if the child whom kind parents are



this hour rearing with deep set hopes that it will be a blessing to them and an ornament to the world at some coming period, yet when that period comes, and brings not with it the long anticipated glory, then, then happiness and hope lock arms in reality, and with drooping heads and wofully downcast, seem for once to desert their heart-home forever.

A young man who ever keeps before him, plain as the path he treads in, the thought that a parent's joy or sorrow, if not even life or death, depend on his conduct, as the pivot on which it turns either way with them, can not but do The violet may wilt down with heat, and the tulip be cut down with frost; yet summer shall not burn, nor shall winter freeze a grateful and dutiful child. Mr. Jefferson's exercise of his mental powers was, while yet in the morning of his life, seen, felt and acknowledged at the very tribunal of civil affairs, and thence throughout all the colonies of America. Patriotism, not partyism, independence to men, not a mean dependence under men, national rights to all nations, not the rights of one nation to the exclusion of all others, personal freedom to every man, not any man to be bound in person, these and other views of humanity's interrelationship to humanity resembling these, were the children of his heart, and which that heart left as its richest treasures to community. The death of the silkworm does not destroy the valuable evidence of its having existed, nor the good derivable from that evidence; neither does the death of a great man take with it the substance and usefulness of his former life, nor does his remembrance perish at the grave. unquenchable desire for good works, great in amount, so move some hearts, that from the

rising to the setting of life, they labor and still labor on, to honor and bless their human bre-A large and capacious mind, whose undoubted greatness of works is everywhere acknowledged, is not to be crushed down and die away, by every, or even any chilly temporary change in the opinions of men; it is not a mere sapling liable to be torn up from its foundation by some sudden and unexpected breeze that chances to pass it; it is rather a mighty banian, whose trunk rises till it cuts the clouds, and outspreading in a thousand descending branches, which reaching the earth, imbed themselves deeply in its bosom, until finally by the magnitude of its outstretched arms, a shady repose is formed, beneath which great bodies of mankind may be refreshed, till at length the civilized races one and all shall have felt and owned that they were rendered happier by its existence, while aroused to deep and universal gratitude, they kneel in devout homage and awe. Death removed Moses from the earth, yet the commandments of God's moral law revealed to him, and from him to men, still exist in all the essential attributes of their original beauty and truthfulness. moved Cicero from the earth, yet his orations, which were the soul's immortal offsprings, still flourish among men. Death removed Locke from the earth, yet the practical theory of the cultivation of the understanding taught by him, even now almost encompasses the nations by its popularity. Death removed Gall and Spurzeheim from the earth, yet their discoveries in the science of mind arrest, and will continue to arrest an intelligent attention, until their united glories and utilities shall be universally admitted to surpass all the other discoveries known to the world. Mr. Jefferson's first noticeable act, which was performed in the forenoon of his life, was the most important and inestimable of any of his great acts; he drew up the Declaration of American Independence to effect a good object, yet the good it has effected, is effecting, and will continue to effect eternally on the condition of mankind, as divided or joined in free civil governmental or municipal communities, neither his very clever comprehensiveness of mind, nor that of the cleverest of his compeers, nor of his or their successors down to the passing generation, can at most, more than dimly conceive. tachment to truth in every form, led him to be truthfully correct in all his statements as libertv's draftist. He knew that the entire truth. undividedly and without reserve, farther than prudence suggested, would in the final result be the best both for the oppressor Britain and the oppressed America. Therefore he uttered the whole truth in the premises, and the result is as he, no doubt, forethought and forefelt it would be. Great is that joy which rests on him that conceives a plan to disinthrall his fettered countrymen, it exceeds the joy that dies with the occasion which gave it origin. No earthly power can be so strong that Omnipotence cannot sway it; thus no error can be so deep and dark, but that truth can reach it, and make it flee from the light thereof. In the deathlessness of truth, lies the reward of finding and giving it to men; for an unending good entirely overpays us for the most tiresome toil we can undergo in the accomplishing of it, merely in that pleasant memory we may enjoy from it, under all circumstances. As there are, doubtless, planetary bodies now existing at unknown

distances, whose light will not strike the earth for millions of years to come; thus, no doubt, there are truthful ideas now among us, and will remain among men from century to century, until years numbering millions too, shall for the first time, find them filling the brain and forming the being of posterity.

From creation's depth to creation's dome, Truth crowds the space immense and roams, Like God's swift sight, that swiftest thought-outflies All over earth, and through cerulean skies, Seared in sin, till single murders sinless seem, Scared in crime, till every act looks like a fiend, Gulfed in misdeeds, deeper than time can reach, 'Scapes not truth; for truth is there to teach, That its clear ken, shoots through dayless night, Smites the sightless soul and gives it light. The creaking snow crust, 'neath the wild doe's feet, Bends, yet breaks not, while a form so fleet Skips o'er it's surface; e'en thus truthful souls Touch this earthlife fearless, as they stroll On threatning surfaces, still wooing life beyond With speed becoming.

Mr. Jefferson's greatness of character can not be enlarged and beautified, yet it may be rendered more visible to the general eye of mankind by judicious encomium; as the milkyway can not have one spark added to its amazing lustre, though the power of telescopic agency may render its real appearance more discernible to the gaze of men. His most influential acts are as familiar to the country as are victory and liberty. His pen moved, and the mask fell from the confused face of his country's enemy; it moved again, and religious freedom of thought, renting her shroud, arose to smile on Virginia; another stroke, and the spirit of American diplomacy, lifted still higher its noble form. His bright memory will as safely pass on to the yet brighter rewards laid up for it in the heart of posterity, as though it were another sun beaming from the depth of Heaven.

Excellent Jefferson! distinguished author of the Declaration of American Independence! elegant literaturist of the eighteenth century! sound and learned statesman! Whoever lives after the great declarer for modern liberties. will strive, if an Americanist in principle, to be worthy of so seerly an ancestor. Whoever rises up in the morning, with a mornlike freshness of piety in thought, will praise the name of Jefferson, and through it the name of Jeho-Whoever lies down in the evening with an evelike placidity of conscience, will resolve to perform on the coming morrow all the fruitional duties of a freeman. Whoever beholds the fourth day of the second summer month of every succeeding year, with a true eye, will live thro' that day as a day of love, and love its return as the return of liberty. Whoever in far off centuries, shall delight to peruse the penly triumphs of the past, will find the perusal of few Patriotic efforts more interesting, delighting and instructing, than the American Declaration. Whoever can comprehend the full benefits lavished on the world, by the timely introduction of that Declaration, has a sweep and power of soul that can draw the sword of Orion, and add to him another belt of starry beauty. Whoever would be a subscriptionist indeed, let him subscribe to the continuance of his country's independence. \mathbf{W} hoever would be a contributionist indeed, let him contribute some commemorating emblem to the free government he enjoys, and to the founders and preservers of his enjoyments. truly becomes an existence, so august as that

which Heaven bestows on humanity, will stamp beneath him the unbecoming hope, that seeks even the sight of an Oligarchy. Whoever duly estimates the good works of his fathers, will esteem himself too highly to ever disgrace the name, or even degenerate from the glory he so honorably inherits. Whoever would have the dews of the sky settle on, and refresh the flowers that bloom over the dust of his fathers. so long as the earth rolls from West to East, let him say nothing but what his immortal sires would themselves gladly have said, and do nothing but what he would fain have a beloved posterity do. Whoever among the uncounted millions of our descendants, shall yet read and re-read the Declaration, which gave an interminable impetus to governmental liberty in America, the administering of which is improved and still improvable, may he declare to man, and re-declare to God, that he will faithfully espouse the principles it espouses, defend the cause it defends, and advance the republic it advances, while he exists among men. it descend to posterity, like the holy mantle unto Elisha — may posterity receive it as the solemn counsel of a spirit, that once ruled a nation in the majesty of love, from the lovely of Monticello; nor approach the summit tomb of its author, without the authority of practically valuing the truth he proclaimed. His fame will live, till every continent on the Globe is overspread with a republic; till every republic greets its sisters with a smile of glory, and until the republican glories of each mingle with, and illumine them all. ferson's unionality of design, during the time he administered the Executive Department of the American Government, towards each State

alike, endeared him profoundly and permanently to the entire republic. Division of purpose, reaching and affecting the general government. he could not conscientiously tolerate, much less countenance. Union in the morning, union at noon-day, union at evening, and an eternal union of the American States, was his oneabiding thought, object, hope and aspiration. He could not bear the idea, that posterity should ever murmur to itself, "there was an America; there were States in that America; there was union among those States; there was power in that union; there was independence in that power, and there was happiness and prosperity in that independence; but now alas! this happy chain of blessings has been broken and has passed away; because discord led to their disunion, disunity made them weak, and weakness brought the downfall of their liberties. leaving but a submerged wreck as a legacy to us, their successors."

Heaven may not send a plague, nor the afflictions of Job on a man who causes or aids in causing the disunion of the American States; yet such a man can not reasonably expect the unwonted glories of Solomon, nor the placid life and death of King Numa to follow him wooingly. Liberty may exist, yet cannot be enjoved between men without unity of interests. Death separates body and spirit; thus a disunion of the States would undoubtedly separate liberty from America. Liberty and America are as double stars, shining in harmony over and throughout the despotic nations of the Preserve state union, and freedom will not tremble, from the undue weakness of her American votaries; yet it is not wise to fear at all, unless the well-based fabric of reality, endangering our entirely free representative form of government, comes up to our evesight boldly; for men must have as well as nations, an unfaltering and established faith in their own self-preserving power. There is an individuality, likewise an unionality, in all the works of nature; so the works of men, tho' all distinguishable from each other, ought still to have a unitability throughout. An American State that disunites from the universal sisterhood of States, without just cause, will cause its own disgrace and ruin, sooner or later. like a man, can not be happiest in solitude and seclusion; for as men need the intercourse and aid of each other, to develop all their faculties naturally, and to live prosperously; so States must have, yield to, and enjoy from each other that peculiar aid, which nature has so plentifully provided each with, for the plain enough purpose of drawing and uniting them together, and rendering them friendly towards, and to feel dependent somewhat one to another.

Mr. Jefferson favored whatever policy of government comported most with a consistent and honorable peace, with his own and foreign nations. He never approved nor gave hearing, to unnecessary involvings of national strife and Away above petty dissensions and contention, local or universal, which point to, lead on, and finally drag a nation down the whirlpool of debt, disgrace, and widespread calamity and death, arose his ennobled mind in sagelike counsel; "that one year of peace is worth a lifetime of national strife and belligerancy; and that that nation is strangely unwise, which, in any case incurs a war, when even at a considerable self-sacrifice it can be As a ruler, he was too wise to apaverted."

prove the engaging in a war because other nations were then, or had been in their time engaged therein. He sought peace for the good of his country, and his country's good required it. If Jupiter chained Prometheus to the rocks of Caucassus, there came a Hercules to release him; but if America ventures her liberty on the wave of chance, by engaging in an unjust and dishonorable warfare, she may find a Jupiter to bind her, yet no Hercules to break the chains that gall her to the bone. A spirit of sterling common sense pervaded his every action, which induced men to rely with decided confidence on what he planned and proposed, whether as presiding magistrate of the republic, or as its honored and cherished private citizen; nay, like Otho, he was universally beloved by his countrymen, whether he ruled them by the laws of the land, or only by the law of his heart's love. Nature itself seeks a continual peace, rather than disturbance at all. nor does it allow the least warfare among its elements, except that a more permanent peacefulness is to arise therefrom. Invasions unjust, followed by just repulsions, create both individual and national warfare, which not being avoided by the invaders, may be commended on the part of the repulsors; for both individual and national rights assuredly exist, as do individuals and nations themselves, and are to be respected and defended though blood is spilt, or even the spirit is stricken from the body in such defence; for what is life, unless what is its own, is its own to protect it, and be protected by it, in its proper use thereof? instance of universal peace on earth, will the divine palm rest on man with its manifold blessings.

Peace! Thou thornless rose thy perfume sweetens life! War! Thou roseless thorn thy all is deathly strife! Peace uplifts the world, leads it on to God, [rod. Sheathes the murderer's sword, and breaks the warrior's Contention binds the soul, prepares the boiling lead, Pours it down its vitals, with awful pain the bed. Altheas bloom, to gild the moody fall Succeeding gay-famed summer, while dying roses call Aloud for sweet successors; thus holy peace Descends on man, bidding all troubles cease, Marring his earthly moments, while beckoning Heaven Chants his advent thither.

Mr. Jefferson sought diligently for that equality of rights and privileges to those governed, which nature has so amply and consummately provided for; it was no part of his natures' independent moral thought, and equally independent moral action,—to at all proscribe the naturally inherited rights of any man, but rather to promote them. Like Lycurgus in his plentitude of governmental wisdom, he granted more right and privilege to those whom he governed, than they, in their less largely developed minds, could conceive existed for them. The quality of common sense was an eminent possession of his, and to it we refer, as a bold index to his almost inimitable general character. It rendered his labors acceptable in his time, and to his age, and their good influence was enjoyed by mankind without delay. He was less a theorist than a practicalist, and yet he had theory enough, to give permanence to his views of practical dealings between neighbor and neighbor, between state and state, and between nation and nation, so as to meet the rational demands of each and every one. Rome's injustice to herself laid her low, more, perhaps, than any other known cause; so America's injustice to herself will bring her to the earth and beneath it, but too quickly. Rulers must be

just to nations and nations to rulers, or neither will prosper. Rulers however begin the work of unjust acts in nearly every case; and the people finish it up by retorting in following their erroneous example, and thus the good of each is lost in the evil of the other. A ruler of high moral independence of mind, and an honor to his office not merely officially honorable, is indeed a centre mast, around which a nation can gather, against which it can lean, and to which it can cling in the confidence of entire safety, when dark troubles and tempestlike dangers approach. Nations should choose rulers that will add strength and beauty to their national statures, not those who cannot be seen, unless held up high, on the hands of As God in the construction and formation of natural objects, which surround and are used in divers ways by man for his enjoyment, has provided them more sufficiently, than man himself in any wise could think to request of him; so a ruler of a people should study out and suggest to them the means to promote their well doing and well living, more abundantly than they, in the fulness of their requisitions can wish him to. It is the part of sound practical sense, to provide amply the means of comfort and support for ourselves and our fellow brethren in this present life. More men have too little than too much common sense. Common sense pursues the direct course of duty and facts, and its opponents soon acknowledge the propriety of its cause; masters the rudiments of its enterprises, before it ventures on the more complex and varied departments of the treatise of life; develops the muscles of its intellectual arms, before it attempts to square off with the strongest thinker; improves its

conversational skill privately, before it affects to vie with the skillful archer of speech publicly; is willing to be an humble pupil of its alphabet in youth, before it becomes the honorable tutor of republics in age; it gives a charming grace to nature, and becomes even the noble nature of man. Mr. Jefferson's personal example as regards private and public enterprise, may well be held high before the nation's eye, and before the eye of every nation. He would be continually improving something. His aim was the aim of advancement; his means were the means of enterprise; and his life was a life of improvement. To himself, he took but little, while to his country he gave every thing in his power to give. He lived because he could not but do the will of nature. yet he lived for the good of his people, because duty enjoined it. He must have a home to protect himself from the elements, yet he would have his countrymen one and all supplied with homes because they were his fellow freemen, as well as because nature required it. lighted to improve and embellish his own residence and possessions, yet the general improvement and embellishment of the habitations and possessions, whether isolated or composing villages and towns and cities, of every size and importance throughout his native realm, and throughout the realm of every nation known to man; delighted him proportionally still more. A country's physical improvement generally beats time to, and keeps step with, the intellectual, moral and social elevation and perfection of those who inhabit it. Higher attainments in the arts, more enlarged research in the sciences, adornments in the form of private dwellings, and public structures of every style

and magnificence, together with choice fruits of scarce numerable varieties, and grains of most nutritive growth for table preparations. with raiment of beauty and richness for bodily comfort and ornament, also facilities for conveying man, or his thoughts alone, to a greater or lesser distance over the earth, by the applying of steam, and its more sprightly co-worker. electricity; these and thousands of like advantages and signs of civilization, are the progeny of private and public, or individual and national necessity, capacity, ingenuity and enterprise. Grecian bulk and grandeur, or Roman beauty and utility of architecture, and of many valuable species of art, are, it is truly said, so many books of history, and tongues of silent, solemn. sacred eloquence to the nations that succeed It is well to be thus. Thus may it be with America, with this exception, that if Americans are true to themselves, posterity will never read their history in ruins unrebuilt, but will read it rather as we read nature's works, by a gradually passing away of old, though useful things, and a gradual, yet certain substitution of new things, still more useful, beautiful, glorious and complete. Neither men nor nations need fear that the great and good works they achieve, will be entirely lost and forgotten by their successors. Herchel's six moons can not be taken from him, nor Saturn's double wreath stripped from his planetary brow by an undivine hand; neither can the heart's upspringing hopes for a life beyond death be shut off, nor the effects of kind deeds performed by a man's two hands be destroyed by enemies on the earth.

Mr. Jefferson earnestly and steadfastly desired as his life, history and character furnish,

ample and entire proof, that the American nation should wisely, virtuously and steadily, and thereby ultimately attain to a commanding position, such as allowed no rivalship between it and the other powers of earth. He wished it to be no meteor to blaze forth in fearful splendor for a brief season, and then pass away to the darkness of oblivion, or lost to the future in the ruinous abyss of the past; but rather a Sirius, whose intrinsic light and glory absorbs, as it were, that of ordinary suns and orbs that shine, till at length its own brightness exceeds that of all other luminaries, and its own glories surpass those of all other bodies throughout the realms of creation. He counseled the nation to provide itself with every needful resource of self-defence, in case of foreign aggression, and also to supply itself with provisional resorts in abundance, with which to fight and resist universal famine; as the snow-frozen Alps of Switzerland are heaped up and reserved by nature to supply Southern Europe with waters in abundance, when a lengthened drouth dries up the rivulets, streams and rivers of the valley. Let it be remembered that a country's true glory, like the air we breathe, though it can not be seen by the eye of man, may yet exist in its most useful, reliable and attractive form; for palaces of pearl, temples of rubies, and emeraldic memorials of human power and skill, may appear to us in astonishing numbers every where in a land, yet that land may be more inglorious before God, than when earth only is the floor, the horizon the walls, and the overarching firmament the only roof to shelter the body or attract the eye; while a pure and honest purpose of heart, however invisible in outward show and pretension,

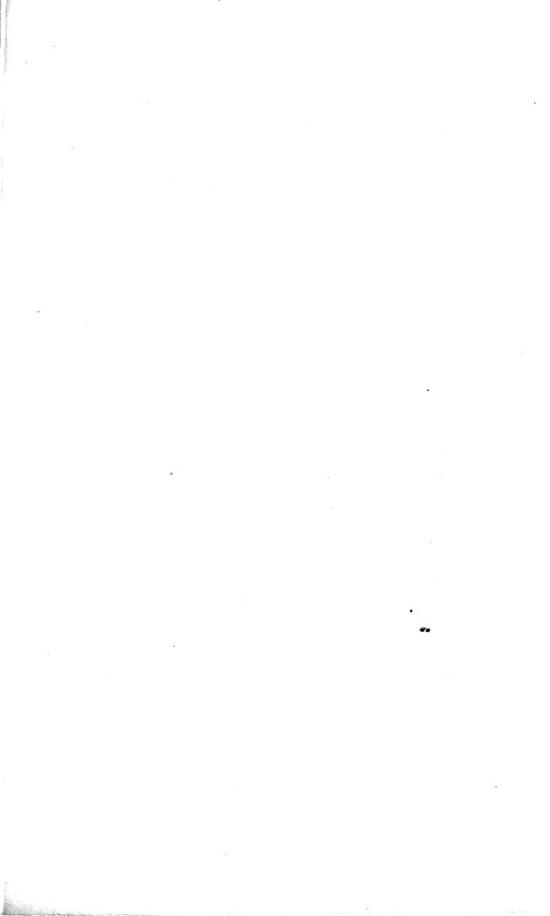
goes farther to glorify a nation than even the

wise can fully comprehend.

May true American glory strengthen in vitality, and enlarge in boundary, till its strength is worldlike, and its boundary earthlike. May its pillarian principles of just government, now based on a rocklike foundation, not be overthrown nor attempted to be overthrown, so long as the word America exists in any language. May the star that guided the immortal Columbus hitherward to our shores never twinkle above her, nor its bright beams gild her broad surface, except in the glory of liberty, and in the liberty of May the land which drew to its borders and bosom the pilgrims of the sixteenth century, know no political or religious usurper, while Plymouth rock bounds the Atlantic, and the name Pilgrim fades not from human re-May the many myriads of the membrance. useful and the excellent men of all classes, who have fled to us, as from a tiger's den, to escape the undue governmental restrictions of European lands, never, never have just cause to rent their garments in inglorious repentance, nor curse the sight of their adopted country. May the next three quarters of a century of the existence of the American orb, exhibit new phases of beauty and attractiveness to the world, surpassing all past experience or present expectation. May every advancing generation which shall yet inhabit American soil, and perpetuate and enjoy its existing principles of upright government, have its soul lighted up, and its hands employed in works of gratitude to its predecessors. May every departing generation be able to congratulate itself on having at least preserved, if not promoted, the American reputation for honorable heroism and profound patriotism; and likewise to carry with it, to its fathers in the uppermost skies, the welcome tidings that freedom still lives and flourishes in the country it left behind it. May her villages which are fast becoming towns, her towns which are rapidly growing to cities, and her chief cities which are each one by itself, biding hopefully yet to surpass in population, a Pekin and a Canton; in enterprise and power, a London and a Paris; in art, and intellectual and moral renown, an ancient Athens and Rome combined; finally exceed in every commendable respect, all the past achievments of men down to the discovery of the Western Conti-May America go on from the acquiring of just possession to just possession, from prosperity to prosperity, from high liberty to yet higher liberty, and from great renown to renown still greater, till the last breath of humanity shall have been drawn. May true American glory increase, while the Moon revolves around the Earth; while the Earth revolves around the Sun, and while the Sun lights up the sphere assigned to it by the hand of Divinity.

Mr. Jefferson's deathplace and place of birth were both fitting spots for either or both of those events; his youth, like Plato's, was passed amid the charms of study and retirement; his manhood, like Seneca's, was spent in conceiving, regulating and conducting State measures; his age, like his youth, found him again wrapt in virtuous reflection and penning down precepts for posterity; his age also shows him engaged in founding an educational institution, such as gives a standing importance to freemen living under a free government; the last day of his long and most useful life was on the Anniversary day when America was first pub-

licly pronounced free; his disinthralled spirit bade the doors of the sky to unfold themselves for its entrance, at a moment when the hallowed hosts thereof could look down and behold his freed country, flushed in its republican jubilee.

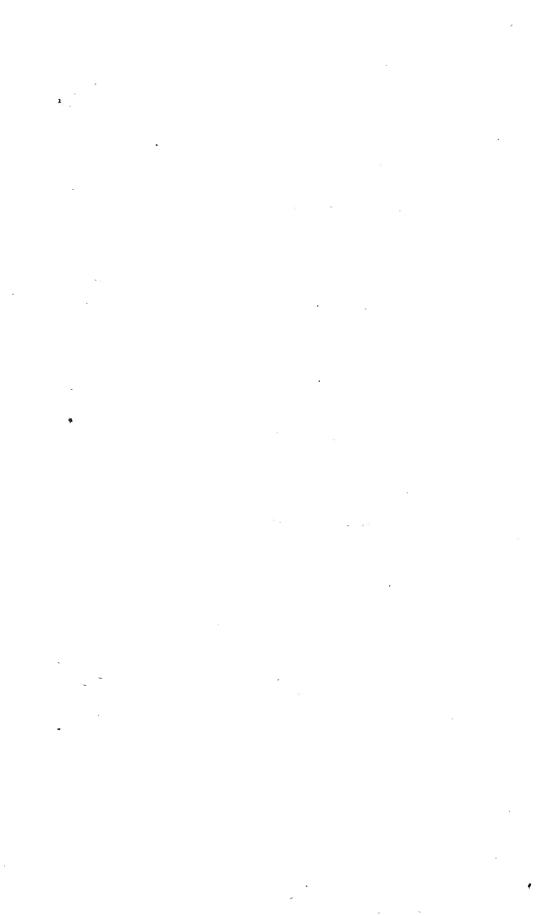


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